

1. *Nat. History vol 8.*

PROGRESS  
OF  
FLAX-HUSBANDRY  
IN  
SCOTLAND. *K*

*Wrote by Lord James one of the Trustees  
for Improvements in Scotland - & publish-  
ed by the Trustees.*

EDINBURGH:

Printed by SANDS, MURRAY, and COCHRAN,

MDCCLXVI.

PROGRESS

OF

FLAX-HUSBANDRY



SCOTTISH

EDINBURGH

Printed by James Macmillan & Co. Edinburgh

MDCCCXVI

P R O G R E S S  
O F  
F L A X - H U S B A N D R Y  
I N  
S C O T L A N D.

**A**S the power of a state consists chiefly in the number and industry of its people, every thing must be of importance that contributes to these ends. This observation puts the linen manufacture in a conspicuous light; for it employs many hands, and requires the most painful industry. In Scotland, this manufacture, which, within the memory of man, scarce deserved the name, has of late years made a progress so rapid, as to become our chief manufacture, circulating more money than all our other manufactures in conjunction. Nor is there any symptom of its being stationary: on the contrary, it is every year boldly advancing with wider and wider steps.

This prospect must be agreeable to every



well-hearted Briton; and to gratify the laudable curiosity of such persons, the following brief account of the progress of the manufacture is presented. The board of Trustees was established *anno* 1727; the value of the linen stamped from November 1727 to November 1728, not including what was made for private use,

was	- - -	L. 103,312	<i>Anno</i> 1747	L. 262,866
<i>Anno</i> 1729	- -	114,383	1748	- - 293,846
1730	- -	131,262	1749	- - 322,045
1731	- -	145,656	1750	- - 361,736
1732	- -	168,322	1751	- - 367,167
1733	- -	182,766	1752	- - 409,047
1734	- -	185,224	1753	- - 445,321
1735	- -	177,466	1754	- - 406,816
1736	- -	168,177	1755	- - 345,349
1737	- -	183,620	1756	- - 367,721
1738	- -	185,026	1757	- - 401,511
1739	- -	198,068	1758	- - 424,141
1740	- -	188,777	1759	- - 451,390
1741	- -	187,658	1760	- - 523,153
1742	- -	191,689	1761	- - 516,354
1743	- -	215,927	1762	- - 474,807
1744	- -	229,364	1763	- - 552,281
1745	- -	224,252	1764	- - 573,243
1746	- -	222,870	1765	- - 579,227

Though the progress of the linen manufacture in general is not the professed purpose of this paper, yet I shall endeavour to account for it, as a proper introduction to a historical narrative of the measures taken by the Trustees for promoting our flax-husbandry.

The



The union of the two crowns of England and Scotland, was a fatal event for the latter. The great increase of power which our kings thereby acquired, reduced the Scotch nobility to a state of humble dependence. From being petty monarchs, they became slaves to the crown, and had nothing left to support their accustomed dignity, but, under protection of the crown, to enslave their inferiors. The national spirit, bold and brave, subsided by degrees; and a general torpor succeeded, the never-failing effect of slavery. Though restored to liberty and independence, by the union of the two nations, yet mutual jealousy and enmity obstructed long the advantages of our new situation. At length the blessings of liberty and independence became conspicuous, and invigorated multitudes to exert themselves in laudable undertakings. And hence that spirit for improvement in Scotland, displayed upon husbandry, upon manufactures, upon commerce, and upon literature.

The establishing a board of Trustees for directing this national spirit, upon fisheries, and upon the manufactures of linen and woollen, was a measure wise and political, zealously promoted by a worthy patriot, who  
was

was rewarded, by the opportunity he long had of serving his country, as an eminent member of that board. His statue was erected in the senate-house, by those of his own profession, in token of their veneration for him, as a judge above all corruption. From his fellow-citizens in general a statue was not less due, as a token of their gratitude for his patriotism.

But whatever was his zeal for the public good, and whatever zeal he inspired into others, yet the operations of that board were not at first attended with great success. The indolence and ignorance of the low people, and their want of honesty, could not be cured but by perseverance and artful management. But unluckily we were at that time ill provided with political physicians, skilled in the cure: which is always the case in a country where industry is dead, and no person thinks of it. The Trustees were forced for some time to grope in the twilight of knowledge: they frequently mistook their road, and adopted measures that were not always adequate to the ends proposed. But, as the intendment of this paper is neither to make a satire nor encomium upon the Trustees, it shall only be observed in passing, that the ignorance



norance of this nation with respect to manufactures, and with respect to the means of promoting them, may well excuse the few errors committed by the Trustees at the commencement of their management; and that these errors ought not to derogate from their merit, in serving their country without the slightest motive of private interest.

The Trustees, having with great assiduity surmounted endless difficulties and obstructions, were encouraged to redouble their diligence. The people are in a measure reclaimed from idleness and dishonesty: industry is gaining ground, and is spreading even to distant corners: spinners and weavers, greatly multiplied, are daily acquiring more and more skill; many bleachfields are perfected, and the colour of our linens is much improved; nor have water-mills been neglected for dressing flax of our own growth; though these, after much expence bestowed, do not now give general satisfaction.

These expensive articles drew great sums from the Trustees; so great, that little was left for promoting other branches. But these articles being now far advanced, so as not to require much further support, it is the intention of the Trustees to promote the growth of  
our



our own flax with their utmost assiduity. This appears the proper time for encouraging that capital article, because a market is now provided for it, viz. a home market, which of all is the best; and no person can doubt of this market when he is informed, that foreign flax to the amount of L. 110,000 is yearly imported into Scotland.

The saving this annual sum to the nation, is not the only, nor indeed the greatest benefit that will accrue by promoting flax-husbandry. A manufacture cannot but be upon a precarious footing, when recourse must be had to a foreign market for the crude materials; and a nation must be upon a precarious footing, when it is in the power of foreigners, with a single *Fiat*, to starve a great proportion of its people, by withdrawing from them the means of labour. This observation is in part unhappily verified by the present state of our flax-commerce; for foreign flax has, within these seven years, been gradually so much raised upon us, that we pay now for it fifty *per cent.* more than formerly. 2dly, For a further encouragement to raise flax, the farmer may be assured, that our own flax, when skilfully managed, and the ground well prepared, is tough, compact, and

and smooth; and consequently, for thread, lace, gauze, cambric, and lawn, is better fitted than that of Holland, which generally is spongy and cottony. Scotch flax, when brought to its utmost perfection, may probably rival even that of Flanders. It is too good for Osnaburgs, which require coarse Russian flax. The Dutch flax is only preferable for thick hollands. *3dly*, All the labour bestowed upon foreign flax purchased by us, in preparing the ground, in sowing and pulling, in watering, grasing, and dressing for the heckle, is paid for by us. What a benefit to this nation must it be, to give bread to numbers of our own people, by employing them in that work? *4thly*, As a considerable proportion of the flax we use is of foreign growth, and as the heckler and the spinner must pay money for it, the one is disposed to over-heckle it, and the other to draw it out into too fine yarn, in order to make the most of their money. This evil would be in a good measure prevented by having flax in plenty of our own growth; for the heckler and spinner would in that case use it freely, without labouring to draw it beyond its grist.

The Trustees, for these reasons, cannot direct their management to a more important object than to that of flax-raising. This indeed they had early in view, though they did not always hit upon the most effectual means. They brought flax-raisers and flax-dressers from Holland, Flanders, and England: they published directions for raising flax: they laid out money for breeding apprentices to flax-raising and flax-dressing: they encouraged the erection of lint-mills; gave salaries to stationed raisers and dressers of flax, and distributed heckles. The article last mentioned did good, and continues to do good: but most of the other articles were less successful than was expected; because the Trustees, inflamed with the spirit of patriotism, made a more rapid progress than was consistent with the circumstances of the country. For one instance, it seldom happens that the best artists are moved by the hope of greater gain to desert their native country; and therefore to send some hopeful young men abroad to be thoroughly perfected in the art, is a measure more slow indeed, but always more successful. And had this method been followed, the superior skill of the men thus educated



educated would have procured them good bread, without burdening the public fund with salaries. By neglecting this safe measure, there were few or no skilful persons that could be employed as stationary raisers and dressers of flax; and the Trustees were forced to take up with such persons as could procure the best recommendations; which generally proceeded from interested motives. The negligence, accordingly, and unskilfulness of these persons, ruined all.

One of the encouragements for flax-raising, was a premium of fifteen shillings upon every acre prepared for flax-seed according to a method prescribed. This premium was in effect putting the plough before the horses. It indeed excited many to sow lint-seed; but it was soon discovered, and might have been foreseen, that it was no sufficient encouragement, without providing a market for the flax when separated from the ground. The premium was not the half of the price of the seed: the product lay upon the farmer's hand, who had neither skill nor people for dressing it with stock and hand, lint-mills being at that time extremely rare; and, by these means, he was upon the whole a great loser by this premium.

Lint-boors came next in play, by a hint taken from Holland and Flanders. The lint-boors there purchase all the green lint in the neighbourhood, water and graze it, and, in a word, prepare it for the ~~spinner~~<sup>heckle</sup>. This measure had a fair appearance; the Trustees were fond of it, and gave great encouragement for carrying it into execution. But this measure proved abortive; and it could not happen otherwise. It was not adverted to, that the culture of flax had subsisted in Holland and Flanders for centuries; and that considerable stocks were acquired by dealing in the different branches of the manufacture; part of which could not be better employed than in the lucrative trade of a lint-boor, surrounded with lint-fields, that save the expence of carriage. In Scotland every article was opposite. The manufacture was still in its infancy: no provision of skilful hands: lint-fields were thinly scattered; and it was a great burden upon the lint-boor to carry so weighty a crop from a great distance: no person had a stock for building houses, preparing canals, &c.; and had there been such persons, they would not have stooped to an inferior branch, while the higher branches lay open to employ their money upon.

The



The water-mills mentioned above, having a specious appearance, met with vigorous encouragement, and exhausted a great deal of public money. They were favourites of the country-people, by saving labour in dressing the flax; of which those were the most sensible who were acquainted with the slowness and fatigue of the stock and hand. It was not doubted but that these mills would incline every farmer to raise flax; and the Trustees were intent to accelerate that effect. A premium was notified of eighteen pence *per* stone for dressed flax of our own growth; which was confined to the three great linen counties of Perth, Fife, and Angus, because the public fund was not adequate to a more general premium. The success of this measure has been considerable; and would have been still more considerable, had a sufficient number of skilful flax-raisers been provided to instruct the country-people. The demand for foreign flax has greatly subsided in these counties; and in a few years will probably vanish altogether. This premium is now transferred to the counties of Lanark, Air, Renfrew, Dumbarton, and Stirling, where it will certainly produce the same beneficial effects;



fects; and the intention is, to carry it progressively through the kingdom.

For the same purpose of promoting flax-raising, quantities of lint-seed have been distributed, mostly in the Highlands, at first *gratis*, and afterward under prime cost. This measure had a good effect; but not equivalent to the sums bestowed upon it. For the farmers were not sufficiently skilled in preparing the ground: and they were not sufficiently anxious to be instructed, because they put little value upon seed which they got for nothing, or at a low price.

To remedy this evil, and to excite a spirit of cultivation, large premiums were given for the greatest quantities of flax produced upon an acre. This inflamed the industry of the farmer, and had the effect of procuring very rich crops. Some farmers became expert in high dressing for flax-seed, and every one was fond to receive instruction; which was the great object of the premium. And yet the Trustees were forced to drop this premium, though with great reluctance, before the effect was completed. Industry was not so far advanced as to have reclaimed entirely the labouring poor from  
from

from trick and deceit. The premiums were considerable; and if, upon the one hand, they promoted good husbandry, they, on the other, were a temptation to practise fraudulent methods for obtaining false reports of the quantities of flax produced. Such frauds are infectious; and the Trustees saw no other means to prevent the infection, but to withdraw the bounty altogether. There is no reason however to repent of having set this measure on foot; for though it may not have had the complete effect intended, it has undoubtedly promoted skill in flax-husbandry, and has also given sufficient evidence to the flax-farmer, that plentiful crops can be produced by high cultivation.

To proceed in the history of water-mills, experience discovered that they were attended with many inconveniencies. The labour of carrying rough lint to these mills from a distance, came to be felt; as also the delay of getting the lint dressed, when the mill happens to be much employed. At the same time, the ordinary yield of this mill in dressed flax, is so much inferior in quantity to that of stock and hand, as to overbalance fully what is saved upon labour; not to mention the hurt that is done to the flax by the violent  
and

and ill-directed action of the mill. But the worst of all is, that the lint-miller, being under no check nor control, is tempted to defraud his customers of part of their dressed flax: and there are instances where the whole has been with-held from poor people, who it was thought would not have courage to bring a law-suit. In many places there is not sufficient house-room provided for the flax that is brought to the mill; which, in a throng time, is often exposed to the air for months together before the miller can reach it. By these means, many lint-millers, I am far from saying the whole, are so sunk in their credit, that the farmers in their neighbourhood, rather than submit to the foregoing hardships, chuse to abandon flax-raising altogether.

It is peculiarly lucky for Scotland, that, during this distressing situation, a flax-machine has been invented, that promises not only to remedy the said inconveniencies, but also to advance flax-dressing to its perfection, with no less frugality than expedition. It is wrought by a single hand, takes up little room, is portable in a cart, and so little expensive, that three or four neighbouring farmers may have one in common for a mere trifle contributed  
by



by each. Its motion, at the same time, is so easy, and so much under command, that it is equal to stock and hand with respect to the yield of dressed flax, and also with respect to the gentleness of its motions. And taking into the account the expedition of this machine, which performs at least thrice the work of stock and hand, it must be pronounced a happy invention.

But we have not exhausted all that can be said in its favour, nor indeed the greater part. It is a capital advantage, that by it the farmer can superintend the dressing his flax without hazard of being cheated; and, what is still more, to get his flax dressed without a farthing of charge; which may be done by the following method. The flax is generally watered and grased before the corn-harvest, or at least before it turn throng; and therefore may be done by the farm-servants, without interrupting other work. The flax may be housed at the end of a barn or other convenient place till winter, when the farm-servants, for want of light, are laid idle for some hours in the afternoon. During this time, the farmer and his servants cannot be more profitably employed than in dressing their flax; and the long nights afford more than suffi-

cient time for dressing all that will be raised by a knot of neighbouring farmers. And even supposing the swiftest progress of lint-husbandry, every farmer may afford to purchase a machine for his own use solely, which may be employed, not only during the dark hours of the afternoon, but frequently in day-light, when bad weather forbids all field-operations.

It is difficult, I am sensible, to entice people to employ in labour their accustomed idle hours ; but address and perseverance will conquer many difficulties. And to operate this conversion of idleness into labour, there is one means among many that cannot fail of success. An article is commonly stipulated by farm-servants as part of their wages, which is, to have ground allotted them for sowing some lint-feed. They are generally put off with the worst soil, ill prepared : their crops are scanty : the expence of dressing unconscionable : and stating every article by a just calcul, lint purchased at a market would come cheaper to them than what they thus procure. To engage them to work at the machine, no more is necessary but that the farmer take them in as partners. He has, for example, one hogthead of lint-feed ; they another

ther among them. Let it be all sown promiscuously in the same field; upon which, for his own sake, the farmer will bestow the highest dressing. It is watered in common, grased in common, and dressed in common. When a division is made in proportion to the quantities sown, the poor labourers will rejoice in a double increase, purchased with a little additional labour, without any expence. Far from grudging this labour, their convening together in one place, with a fire for drying the flax, will afford them high amusement. Their labour will be easy, being divided among many hands, and it is fit that the farmer encourage them by taking part in the labour. A little care, at the same time, with proper lanterns, such as are used in heckling, will remove all hazard of fire; especially if the farmer himself take a narrow survey every evening when the servants leave off work.

Though the dressing of flax by this machine requires not more skill than by stock and hand, yet to show the management of it, particularly the dexterous handling of the flax, and to instruct the country-people in the preceding articles of chusing and preparing ground, weeding, pulling, watering,



and grafing, it must be of consequence that the Trustees educate and employ in different parts a number of itinerants. This method of having the flax dressed by the country-servants in their otherwise idle hours, is far superior to that of lint-boors, even supposing we were ripe for these artists ; because by no other means is it possible to get flax dressed without expence, and indeed without any labour that can be reckoned upon. The expence of dressing has hitherto been a bulky article ; and, considering the waste occasioned by water-mills, is perhaps not under 40 *per cent.* of the flax ; all of which may be saved by the machine under consideration.

Though few of the measures laid down by the Trustees for promoting flax-husbandry, have corresponded to the sanguine hopes at first conceived of them ; yet these measures, imperfect as they were, contributed considerably to the flax-husbandry, which is farther advanced than is commonly thought. The value of flax annually produced in Scotland, after it is heckled, and ready for the spinner, may be pretty nearly ascertained as follows. The linen cloth now made in a year amounts to about *L.* 700,000 ; the value of the thread manufactured in a year cannot be less than  
*L.* 100,000 ;

L. 100,000 ; we are more uncertain about the quantity of the linen yarn exported ; but we cannot be far wrong in stating it at another L. 100,000 : and these articles amount in whole to L. 900,000. The next point is, to ascertain the value of heckled flax used in these different articles. Taking all the different kinds of linen cloth at an average, the value of the heckled flax may be about a third ; and the proportion is rather more in thread. Of the yarn exported, the value of the flax cannot be much below the half. Joining these particulars together, the value of the heckled flax annually manufactured in Scotland amounts to L. 316,666. Subtract the value of the flax imported, and the price of heckling it, which is performed at home, computed to L. 125,000, the remainder, L. 191,666, or L. 190,000 in round numbers, is the value of the heckled flax from our own growth.

The purpose of this paper is, to encourage land-holders and farmers to apply vigorously to flax-raising, which, from what is said above, will appear equally beneficial to themselves and to their country. The Trustees struggled at first with many difficulties ; the ignorance, the idleness, the indocility of the people.

people. But happily these difficulties are in a measure surmounted. There are not wanting hands expert in raising and dressing flax; and the Trustees are bent upon increasing their number. To deal in this article, the encouragement must be great, when there is a market at home; and there must always be such a market while importation continues. The late premiums for the greatest quantity of flax upon an acre, have spread the art of preparing land for flax-seed; and reiterated experiments of the great produce of flax from high dressing, must rouse every farmer. The bounty of eighteen pence *per* stone for dressed flax, though limited to a few counties, will in time make its progress through every county; and farmers, if they regard their interest, will early prepare for receiving the benefit of this bounty when it reaches them. But of all encouragements for flax-raising, that of the new machine is in reality the greatest; by preventing a great waste of flax, by rescuing farmers out of the fraudulent hands of lint-millers, and by saving an endless expence formerly laid out for bringing lint to the heckle. In using this machine, a farmer superintends the dressing his own flax; it is done by his own servants when they



they cannot be otherwise employed; and it is done without expence. A crop of flax, of all the most lucrative, will by these means pay a considerable part of the rent, and make quicker returns of money than most other crops. Nor ought it to be overlooked, that the finding employment for servants when they would otherwise be idle, comes to the same with lessening their wages. The Trustees will scatter a few of these machines *gratis* in different quarters to serve as models. The machine is of easy construction, and can be correctly copied by any good workman.

It is zealously to be wished, and may reasonably be expected, that flax-raising will be greatly promoted by this machine, and will creep into every corner. But there is something still wanting to complete the encouragement; and that is, a ready market for the flax when it is prepared for the heckle. To that end the Trustees will consider whether it may not be proper to appoint lint-markets in certain counties, where buyers and sellers may resort; and to proclaim premiums for the greatest quantities of flax brought by individuals to these markets; and we cannot copy a better model than the premiums given for  
improving

improving the staple of our wool, a regulation that has a fine effect. It is submitted, whether it may not be proper to begin with appointing three or four markets within the five western counties, which at present enjoy the bounty of eighteen pence *per* stone for home flax; because frauds that may be committed in claiming the proposed premiums, will be easily checked by the itinerant raisers and dressers of flax appointed for instructing the people in these counties. The Trustees will also consider, whether it may not be useful to proclaim at the same time flax-fairs in central places of other counties, assuring the inhabitants of the premium in their course.

Having discussed flax-raising, we shall subjoin an appendix regarding the linen manufacture in general. As this manufacture is now advanced much beyond what is necessary for our own consumpt, it is the duty of the Trustees to attend to the commerce of that commodity, and to use their endeavours to put it upon the best footing. To form a solid judgment upon this important subject, one must be previously acquainted with the manner in which that commerce is carried on at present; a brief view of which is as follows. London is our capital market: our  
linens



linens are consigned to factors who sell upon time: to them it is of little consequence what the price be, or whether punctual payment be made, because they remit only what money they receive: commission and other charges are subtracted; which, with slow payments, is a grievous burden upon the dealers in this country. Of a commerce carried on in this manner, the natural and necessary effect with respect to the dealers here, is to confine it to those who have large stocks, and can afford to lie out of their money. This state of our linen-commerce must cramp the manufacture exceedingly: it is in effect a monopoly, and a monopoly of the very strictest kind, confining manufacturers to the wholesale-dealer who lives among them, or in their neighbourhood; for to try all the dealers where a single web only is to be sold, would be a great waste of time, with little prospect of a better price. There are, it is true, some petty dealers engaged in this commerce, known by the name of *hawkers*, who afford to the weaver some slight relief against this slavish dependence. These men lay out their small stocks in picking up linen cloth as it comes from the loom; which they also must sell to the wholesale-man, for they cannot af-



ford to deal directly with London. But being better able than a weaver with a single web, to cope with the wholesale-dealers, and having more knowledge of the trade, they generally obtain a more equal price, because they can change about if they be ill treated. Hence it is, that these hawkers are no favourites of the wholesale-men; which remarkably appeared in an application to the board of Trustees, inveighing bitterly against hawkers, and calling forth the vengeance of the board upon them, as destructive to the manufacture. It was possibly imagined, that the Trustees might have overlooked a maxim of which none are ignorant, viz. That the more numerous purchasers are, the better for the manufacture. But this incident may justly give reason to apprehend a combination among the wholesale-dealers to destroy hawkers: an agreement not to purchase from them, or to keep down the price, will produce that effect; and, by this simple means, the whole trade may be monopolized by the great dealers without a competitor.

The plan that bids the fairest for putting this commerce upon its most advantageous footing, is, that there be four linen fairs held annually at Edinburgh, as the most central place,

place, each of them to continue four or five days ; which will naturally produce a considerable circulation of ready money, and consequently afford the poor manufacturer some instant relief for carrying on his business. We indeed can scarce hope for commissions from wholesale-merchants in London, who have linen-draperies at hand to furnish them goods for completing their assortments. But an instance somewhat similar, gives encouragement to hope that other English dealers may resort to our fairs. When the commerce of black cattle was laid open by the union, our people carried their droves to England : but expence of travelling, and fluctuation of markets, made this a precarious and hazardous commerce, and reduced to bankruptcy many of our drovers. At length the prospect of choice and cheapness at a public market, drew down to this country the English dealers ; and now the greater part of our cattle are sold at home for ready money. What reason have we to doubt, but that the English dealers will resort to our fairs for linen, as they do for cattle ? There is no reason to doubt, provided we perform our part ; which is, to be industrious in advancing our linens to their perfection. Our

situation for such fairs is undoubtedly better than that of Ireland: for, supposing other articles equal, an English dealer, unaccustomed and averse to sea-voyages, will never prefer a perilous navigation before a safe and snug journey upon *terra firma*.

The trouble and expence of carrying home goods that remain unsold at a fair, have suggested a linen-hall, as a repository for such goods, where dealers may be provided during the interval between two fairs. But as it is difficult to foresee the fate of any new project, the Trustees, sensible of former disappointments, will probably be disinclined to adopt any expensive plan for a linen-hall. It is the safest course to be frugal in making the experiment: success may encourage them hereafter to be more bold.

One capital view of the plan proposed, which can scarce fail of success, is, to rescue the poor weavers from the oppression of the wholesale-dealer, by affording them a choice of markets. If the price offered by their neighbour, the wholesale-man, be not thought sufficient, a number of them clubbing together may send their goods to an Edinburgh fair, under the care of one of themselves, or of any trusty person. This plan will be a  
signal



signal blessing to the hawkers in particular: it will enlarge their field of action: it will make them independent: and it will augment their number; than which nothing can be more beneficial to the manufacturer. Every web is picked up as it comes from the loom, with a view to some little profit at an approaching fair; and in so swift a circulation, a very slender profit will content a hawker. This plan will be equally convenient for pedlers, who, instead of painful journeys through the country to make up their assortments, find at hand in a fair, every sort they have occasion for. Nor need we be diffident of commissions from Glasgow, Liverpool, and other trading towns on the west coast; because the dealers in these towns will find themselves cheaper served here than at London.

These effects of the plan are obvious at first view. But there appear other good effects, some more, some less extensive, that cast up upon further consideration. In the *first* place, Frugal persons, who purchase for their own use, will undoubtedly resort to the public market, because ready money will afford them both choice and cheapness. *2dly*, Buyers and sellers coming to be mutually acquainted, the reputation of the best artists will procure them

them private commissions for all the linen they make. *3dly*, These fairs will be a great means for improving the fabric of our linens. At present there is little opportunity for a comparative trial; but here manufacturers will soon be made sensible that they have little chance to vend their goods if the fabric be in any degree imperfect. *Lastly*, The quick circulation of money produced by these fairs, will enable the manufacturer to vend his goods at the lowest price; and the current price for ready money being thus fixed, must have the effect to regulate in some measure the bargains that are made upon time.

Every one who gives attention to what is passing in the world, must perceive the importance of the linen manufacture to Scotland. Like a stone rolled half-way up-hill, it must be pushed to the summit, or it will fall to the bottom, and involve all in ruin. Honest labour and unrelenting industry will push this manufacture to the summit, and produce a moderate degree of opulence, with its never-failing attendants, plenty and population. Opulence so acquired, being distributed through every vein of the politic body, serves to animate every member. May Heaven avert from our thoughts the ambition of acquiring

acquiring wealth independent of labour and industry; for profuse wealth, being always unequally distributed, never fails to sap the foundations of virtue, to erect a throne for luxury, and for depraved selfishness, which reduce a nation to an abject state of degeneracy, and terminate in a total corruption of manners.

F I N I S.



acquiring wealth independent of labour and  
industry; for private wealth being always  
unequally distributed, never fails to lay the  
foundations of virtue, to erect a throne for  
luxury, and for every selfishness, which  
reduces a nation to a state of degra-  
dation, and terminates in a total corruption of  
manners.

